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# THE OBSERVATOR.

Harry-Clitus *run Mad. The Player turn'd Author. On the Play-Houſe Fidlers. Of a Play-Houſe Erected in* Goodmans-Fields. *A Pamphlet call'd,* London Lampoon'd. *Of the* Letters from the Living to the Living. *The Exorbitant Grants of King* William. *Of the Whim of Four Eſtates.*

From Wednesday October the 27th, to Saturday October the 30th, 1703.

*Country-m.* MAſter *Obſervator*, I have a ſad Story to tell you: Poor *Harry Clitus* is run Mad; the Magiſtrate he ſo Scandalouſly treated in the City, has frighted him out of his ſeven Sences: But the *Libelling Club*, which conſiſts of *Atheiſts*, *Blaſphemers*, *Players* and *Non jurant Parſons*, are reſolved to do the Devils work by Turns; and *George Powell*, the *Player*, has begun; and he has Libell'd you as far as his *weak Capacity* would carry him: He ſays, *he ſets his Name to the Paper, to let you know who did you the Kindneſs.*

*Obſ.* I muſt needs ſay that for the *Players*, They are generally Maſters of more Sence than *their* Authors; but they are ſo accuſtom'd to Repeating of Nonſence on the Stage, that 'tis a hard matter for 'em to go out of their Road when they Write. But you don't ſee the *Kindneſs* of the *Player*; he has given me *His Ill Word*, which is Neceſſary to a *Good Mans* Reputation; for *Their Good Word* is the *higheſt Scandal.* I can't tell what Reputation the *Players* may have in *England*, but ſure I am they were *Rogues* and *Villains* by the Statute Law of Heathen *Rome*; they were void of any *Franchiſe*, and 'twas *Diſreputable* for the *meaneſt Citizen*, or *Freeman*, to keep *Them* Company.

And it is a ſhame *ſuch Perſons* ſhould be Tolerated in a *Chriſtian Country*, eſpecially where Pretenſions are made to *Virtue* and *Morality*; ſince Playes have been Condemned by the Unanimous Reſolution of the whole Primitive Church, by the Canons of 55 ſeveral National Provincial Synods, by the Works of 71 Fathers, and Antient Chriſtian Writers of chiefeſt Note, by the Suffrages of above 150 Chriſtian Authors of all ſorts, and by the Sentence of 40 Heathen Philoſophers, Orators, *&c.* who have Sentenced *Stage Plays* as the greateſt Obſtacles to *Virtue*; and the Chriſtian Synods and Fathers have pronounced this heavy Sentence againſt Stage-Plays, *That they are the moſt Peſtilent Corruption of all Mens (eſpecially* Young Mens) *Minds, and Manners; the chief Fomenter of* Vice *and* Wickedneſs; *the greateſt Enemy of all* Virtue, Grace *and* Goodneſs; *the moſt miſchievous* Plagues *that can be harboured either in* Church *or* State; *yea,* Infernal Paſtimes, *not tolerable among* Heathens, *nor Sufferable in a well ordered* Chriſtian Republick, *not to be Haunted or Applauded by any Civil Vertuous Perſons, who are either mindful of their* Credit, *or their own* Salvation. The very Heathens have made Laws and Ordinances againſt Stage-Plays, as have done many Chriſtian States and Kingdoms. Our Pious and Renowned Queen *Elizabeth* totally Suppreſſed them; and I make no Queſtion but our Vertuous and Gracious Queen *Ann*, our Second *Elizabeth*, will do the like, as ſoon as the Account of the horrid Blaſphemy, the Oaths and Curſes uſed in that Place, and the miſchief it does to the Publick, ſhall be laid before Her: And tho' theſe Prophane People by ſome means or other, do Write themſelves Her Majeſties Servants, yet our Pious Queen has not ſo much as once Countenanced thoſe Scenes of Lewdneſs with Her Royal Preſence, ſince Her Happy Acceſſion to the Throne. Nor did Her Glorious Predeceſſor, the Mighty *William*, of Immortal Memory, ſo much as once Countenance them with His Royal Preſence, during his whole Reign.

*Country-m.* 'Tis your great Happineſs, Mr. *Obſervator*, that tho' the Players are Countenanced by ſome of the Courtiers, that they are very ſcandalous in our Courts of Juſtice; and ſo you need not fear getting an *Aſthma*, by their Proſecution: Tho' in their Penny Libel they Accuſe you of having ſpoken Treaſon againſt Her Majeſties Fidlers, here are three Eminent Crowdero's, *Dean*, *Franciſco*, and *Smith* (that will Pipe and Fiddle with any three in *Europe*) are very Angry with you: I wonder whether in that Band of Fidlers, and Muſicians they are provided with a Whiſtler. You know our *Tom* Whiſtles a moſt Lamentable Tune all Day long to my Horſes; if he could get in to be Whiſtler at the Play-Houſe, 'twould be a better Employment for him than going to Plough.

But I have ſome Play-Houſe News to tell you: The great Play-Houſe has Calv'd a Young one in *Goodmans-Fields*, in the paſſage by the Ship-Tavern betwixt *Preſcot* and *Chambers*-Street.

*Obſ.* 'Tis in a very good place, in *Roſemary Lane* Precinct. I know no Reaſon why the Quality at both Ends of the Town ſhould not have the ſame Diverſions. This will be a great Eaſe to the Ladies of *Rag-Fair*, who are now forc'd to Trudge as far as *Lincolns-Inn-Fields* to mix themſelves with Quality. The Mumpers of *Knockvargis* will now have the Play-Houſe come to them, who were not able to ſtump it to t'other end of the Town on their Wooden Legs: The Does in *Tower-Hill* Park, and *Roſemary-Lane* Purlieu, will be Fodder'd nearer home this Winter: And the Sailors will have better Entertainment for their looſe Corns than formerly.

But we may hence gather the Deſigns of the *Devils* Inſtruments in the Propagation of *Vice*; *Satan* muſt have a Chappel in every Corner. The City of *London* is beleaguer'd with the Armies of *Hell*, who have rais'd their Batteries of *Sin* againſt it. The Enemies of our Country find there is no way ſo effectual to introduce *Popery* and *Slavery*, as a free Currency of *Vice* and *Prophaneſs*, and no way like it to impoveriſh that Honourable and Wealthy City: And ſuch as have been Men of Thought, have taken Notice of the Methods of Deſigning Perſons uſed againſt that City, in ſome Reigns; by Building *Exchanges* in the *Suburbs*, and near the Court, to draw the Trade from the City; by Building Sumptuous Edifices to entice the Nobility of the Land from Inhabiting their Antient Houſes in the City of *London*; inſomuch that I know not of one Nobleman at this Time an Inhabitant in that City. But the moſt Miſcheivous of their Deſigns, is the *Debauching*

of

of the City Youth by Idle and Wicked *Shows*, and Pastimes, taking their Minds off from Business, and filling their Heads with Fantastical and Vain Notions, instead of the Profitable Ones of Commerce and Traffick.

*Country-m.* What you say, Sir, is very true. Here's a Book in my Hand, call'd *London Lampoon'd*, Published but Yesterday, which plainly shows you the Methods taken in former Reigns, to Ruin the City of *London*, and that the same Methods are now carried on by *Harry Clitus*, and his Club: And because the Citizens took no Notice of *Harry's* Impudence in several of his Papers, he thought they were grown Tame; and thereupon he grew Insolent, and Barbarously Scandaliz'd one of their Chief Magistrates.

*Obs.* All the Endeavours of that Party are vain, and will prove Ineffectual; for the Citizens are come to a better Temper than in former times, and will not suffer their Liberties to be again torn from 'em by the Violence of Contending Parties. Faction in a City is like a *Moth* in Cloth, it may seem a small thing, and yet accomplish the Destruction of a City. I am not Insensible of the Attempts of these People of late in Ridiculing the most Glorious and Wealthy City of the Universe.

This Club of *Libellers* have scarcely Published one Book without Scandalous Reflections on the City of *London*, and its Citizens. I have a Libel of theirs in my Hand call'd, *Letters from the Living to the Living*, I'll Read you one Passage in Page 184. 185. *I have little other News to tell you, but that the whole Nation is so Unanimously satisfy'd with the Conduct of the present Government, that the very Citizens of* London, *as a Testimonial of their Loyalty, have, thro' Respect to Female Soveraignty, Resign'd to their much Wiser Wives, the Sole Dominion of their Families, and have for several Months last past, granted them the outside of the Bed, as a Token of their Supremacy.* Pater Noster-Row, *which was formerly one of the most Trading Streets in the City, is now inhabited by none else but Petticoat Shopkeepers; and they begin very much to enlarge their Territories in the Night in* Cheapside; *so that it is verily believ'd by most of the* Moor-field *Astrologers, the City in a little time (if the Stars can foretell any thing) will fall under an* Amazonian *Government, and that the Husband must stay at Home and Cook the Pot, whilst the Wife takes a Walk to* Cuckolds-Point, *to get an Appetite to her Dinner.*

This is but a Sample of the Reflections in this Book upon the Citizens of *London*; and indeed we need not wonder at it, when in the same Book they have taken the Freedom to Banter Her Majesties Journey to the *Bath*, Her Success at *Vigo*; and indeed is so full of *Prophaness*, *Atheism*, *Baudry*, and *Calumny*, that I wonder among so many Grand Juries, since that time Impannel'd in the City of *London*, no one has Presented that Libel.

*Country-m.* Presented; Quotha! Why, Sir, I heard the top of Scandal on my Queen, The Book call'd the *Exorbitant Grants of King* William, was offered to last *Grand Jury*, and they did not Present it.

*Obs.* They had no Reason to Present that Book, the Printer thereof was taken into *Custody* by the Ministry; the Author thereof was discovered; and for a *Grand Jury* to Present a Book that was under the immediate Consideration of the Ministry, would be a sort of Anticipation of the Justice of the Government, whose Bill against those concerned in that Book, is expected every Sessions. I dare not tell you what I know about the Contrivance of that Book.

*Country-m.* Master *Observator*, *Harry Clitus* Trumping up his *Four Estates* against next Sessions I hope then we shall find what they are. Methinks I long to see the Fourth Estate of *Parliament*: I fancy how our Members will look at their new Co[m]panion; I believe just as a *Cow* looks on a Bastard *Calf*. But I fancy *Harry Clitus* is a *Papist*, and by the Fourth Estate, he means the *Pope*; for you know in the Days of our *Popish* Ancestors before *Harry* the Eighth, We had *King*, *Lords*, and *Commons* and *Pope* over 'em all.

*Obs.* He that Designs to make more Estates in *Legislative* Authority, designs to make useless the whole *Power* and *Authority* of *Parliament*, and to place the *Legislative Power* in the King: That is they are minded to have a *French* Government: Nor have they brought One Authority sufficient to prove that there are *Three Estates*, besides the *King*, in Parliament. For those who can distinguish betwixt the *Executive* and *Legislative Power*, Lodged in the Kings of *England*, how they are Conjoyn'd in One *Person*, and yet Separate in *Act*, very well know that the Authorities they have Quoted, do make more against them, than for them. —— But, pray, Honest *Country-man*, don't forget to bring me the News next time you go to *London*; it will be far more Edifying than a Discourse about Fools and Fidlers.


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